

Minister's Opioid Emergency Response Commission Meeting #2

Record of Discussion
Thursday, June 29 and Friday June 30, 2017

Boardroom 106 – 29nd Floor, Telus South
10025 Jasper Ave, Edmonton

1. Personal Reflections

Over the two-day meeting, the Commission started its deliberations by reflecting on members' personal and work experiences with victims of the opioid crisis.

2. Review of Agenda and Conflict of Interest Declarations

In the meeting, the Commission was focused on:

- Gaining a better understanding of the evidence supporting harm reduction, including supervised consumption services and treatments for opioid use disorder.
- Understanding the current availability of harm reduction and medication-assisted treatment options for Albertans who are opioid dependent.
- Increasing awareness of the opioid crisis budget opportunities and constraints.
- Considering initial urgent recommendations and budget allocations.

In light of the agenda, members updated their conflict of interest declarations.

3. Co-Chair Updates

Co-Chairs shared updates from the British Columbia Overdose Action Exchange which took place in Vancouver on Friday June 16, 2017.

4. Guiding Principles and Criteria for Decision-Making

In a facilitated session, members agreed on principles to guide their discussions and adopted criteria for decision-making to formulate recommendations and make budget allocations for priority actions.

5. Commission Budget

Dr. Grimsrud outlined available opioid funding for 2017-2018 ≈ \$30 million. Members were also provided with potential funding options for their consideration.

6. Evidence review

Members were presented with briefings on supervised consumption services (SCS) and treatment options for Opioid Use Disorder

SCS

Dr. Hyshka provided an overview of the:

- Evidence on supervised consumption services;
- Process for securing a federal exemption to operate an SCS; and
- Current status of SCS in Canada

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Dr. Klein provided an overview of provincial government efforts to expedite the submission of federal exemption applications from Alberta.

Treatment

Dr. Klein reviewed provincial data on the status of Opioid Dependency Treatment in Alberta.

Dr. Trew outlined the response and results attained through prior Alberta Health Services (AHS) expansion actions and other treatment options in the province.

Dr. Meador introduced supervised injectable opioid assisted treatment (siOAT) as an option for the Commission to consider.

7. Review of Proposals for SCS and Treatment Programs

Representatives from three applicants for federal exemptions to offer SCS presented their proposals to the Commission.

- AHS: Sheldon M Chumir Health Centre, Calgary
- AHS: Royal Alexandra Hospital, Edmonton
- Access to Medically Supervised Injection Services Edmonton (AMSISE): the Boyle McCauley Health Centre, Boyle Street Community Services, and the George Spady Centre

8. Coordinating Committee Action Plan Treatment Items

Alberta Health representatives provided an overview of the treatment activities identified by the former Urgent Opioid Response Coordinating Committee, which broadly fell under three categories:

- Increasing access;
- Expanding the list of prescribing providers; and
- Providing wrap-around support to people.

The review of action items gave members an opportunity to review a range of potential action items to recommend for funding in 2017-18 fiscal year.

9. Facilitated Discussions

Based on the information received over two days of meetings and facilitated discussion among members, the Commission narrowed down the list of potential urgent actions to:

- SCS
- Expansion of the naloxone program
- Improvement in treatment options, including potential scaling up of access to OAT and siOAT
- Work with medical professionals to increase access to treatment
- Public education